



SUCCESS STORY

IGDA Impex Penetrates US Market

IGDA has successfully built a market presence in the USA, via their American distributor – Vivido Natural.

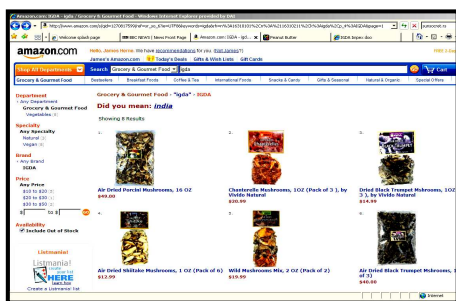


Photo: Amazon.com web site

A major success for IGDA has been the placement of their mushroom products on the Amazon.com web site (see screen shot of the IGDA products, above). When added to the distribution of their products via selected supermarket chains, these channels have given IGDA a significant new market for their products.

The USAID Agribusiness Project has helped IGDA, and other wild mushroom companies, to expand their markets and capture more of the value added in the mushroom business. The project will continue assisting these companies to further expand their international market penetration.

IGDA Impex, a woman owned and managed Serbian private company, was founded in 1990. IGDA is now one of the leading processors and exporters of Serbian wild mushrooms and truffles, and they currently supply customers in many EU countries and in the USA as well. Wild Forest Mushrooms are a traditional delicacy in Serbia, but in the past the real value of these products was being captured by re-packers in Italy. Exported in bulk from Serbia, Italian packers would brand the mushrooms as “Product of Italy”, and then sell them locally, and as exports, at many times the original purchase price.

The USAID Agribusiness Project assists Serbian wild mushroom processors to learn more about international markets, and to develop direct contacts with buyers in Europe and the U.S. Training and technical assistance in standards, packaging, marketing, and market linkages, have been an essential part of the assistance these Serbian mushroom companies have received to help them venture past their historical trading partners, and to capture more of the value for Serbia.

Wild forest mushrooms are one of the best examples of a product from Southern Serbia where Agribusiness Project assistance has been far reaching, and it has had a significant impact on the firms and the rural areas where collection takes place. An important element of this sector is the fact that wild mushroom collection is one of only a few sources of income available to many rural residents. IGDA, and other wild mushroom companies in Serbia, contract with thousands of rural residents for the collection of mushrooms, and they inject substantial sums of money into the surrounding economies.

IGDA has been one of the forerunners of Serbia’s success in “bringing home the value” in the wild mushroom sector. IGDA has received significant assistance from the project, including participation at a number of international trade fairs, but perhaps the most important is their participation at the Fancy Food trade show in New York in 2008 and 2009. This show opened up the American market for IGDA, and through their US distributor, IGDA products are now available on Amazon.com, and at the Whole Foods, and Hannaford’s supermarkets.